



Hampton Conservation Commission
100 Winnacunnet Road
Hampton, NH 03842
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CONSERVATION SPECIAL MEETING

August 2, 2011

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Barbara Renaud, Gordon Vinther, Jay Diener, Mark Loopley, and Pete Tilton

In accordance with RSA 91-A:3 (b), Peter Tilton motioned to make this a non-public meeting, Mark Loopley seconded, and all voted in favor.

Tracey Degnan of the RCCD (Rockingham County Conservation District) addressed the Commission regarding the on-going phragmites control program on Landing and Drakeside Roads. The cuttings have been facilitated via WHIP (Wildlife Habitat incentive Program) dollars coming through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) that have provided a 75%/25% match. The program will end in 2013.

Tracey brought aerial photos that demonstrated a significant reduction in phragmites coverage in the project areas between 2007 and 2010.

Previously, the cutting has been done by New England Wetlands. There was a brief discussion about the pros and cons of rehiring them if the cutting should continue, which came to a stop when Tracey informed the Commission that the firm is likely out of business. Several other firms, including Northeast Wetland Restoration and Swamp Inc. were discussed as acceptable replacements.

In 2010, New England Wetlands was paid \$6,791 for cutting and removing the phragmites at the two sites, of which \$5,093 was covered by the grant. There is \$13,498 left in the grant, and assuming that it would contribute another \$5,093 to cover the cost of cutting in 2011, that would leave \$8,399 for the remaining two years of the program.

If we do not spend this year's allocation for cutting by the end of September, 2011, we will be non-compliant with the terms of the grant, and will be at risk of losing the remaining funds. Pete asked if there would also be a fine imposed, and Tracy said there would not.

The discussion moved to the question of continuing to cut the phragmites at these two sites. Tracey mentioned that chemical controls (DES-approved swiping and targeted spraying) are being tested at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye, N.H. The swiping involves cutting the phragmites, letting them regrow

to about a foot in height, and then hand-swiping them with chemical agents. The spraying (foliar treatment) is local and targeted. Both procedures would require N.H. Dept. of Agriculture permits. The chemical treatments are designed to reach down into the rhizomes to kill the plant completely and prevent it from popping up elsewhere. These treatments would require applying for Dept. of Agriculture permits, and it is possible but unlikely that we could obtain those permits by the end of September. We discussed using one or both of those techniques next year, when we would have more time to plan for it. Also, Tracey said there should be documentation of the techniques used and results achieved at Odiorne by next spring, so we could benefit from what they will have learned. We'll also have to find out next year how much the chemical treatments will add to the cost of the project, and what impact that may have on the scope of the project.

Peter motioned to proceed with the phragmites cutting this year, and to revisit next spring the concept of incorporating chemical treatments in the two remaining years. Mark Loopley seconded the motion, and all voted in favor of it.

Tracey will get bids for cutting from the remaining contractors for each site (as opposed to both sites together), and will pass them to Jay and Rayann. Tracey will also try to find out from Department of Public Works if they will be willing to burn the cuttings from the Hampton sites.

Mark Loopley motioned to end the non-public meeting, Barbara Renaud seconded, and all voted in favor.